

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

v.

ELIJAH MELTON; and KAREEM
PIRES,
Defendants.

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) C.A. No. 24-59-JJM-AEM
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ORDER

Pending before the Court is Defendant Kareem Pires’ Motion to Sever. ECF No. 53.

The Government should be allowed to try Mr. Melton and Mr. Pires together on the conspiracy counts that apply to them because: they stem from the same nucleus of facts and involve the same witnesses; it will give the factfinder a fuller picture/scope of the conspiracy; it will satisfy the concerns about inconsistent verdicts; it will help “to conserve judicial and prosecutorial resources” (*United States v. Soto-Beniquez*, 356 F.3d 1, 29 (1st Cir. 2004)); and it supports the courts’ strong preference for trying coconspirators together.

That said, the risk of prejudice to Mr. Pires of sitting through testimony on how Mr. Melton allegedly tried to have Assistant United States Attorneys in a drug case killed, none of which involved Mr. Pires, is real.

Considering this, the Court is considering severing the trial based on the counts, not the parties. That is, holding one trial for Mr. Melton on the schemes that do not involve Mr. Pires (Counts 2, 3, and 5), and another trial for Mr. Melton and

Mr. Pires on their alleged conspiracy (Counts 1 and 4). The Court believes this makes more sense than severing Mr. Melton and Mr. Pires.

The parties (Mr. Pires, Mr. Melton, and the Government) shall show cause on or before June 6, 2025, why the Court should not GRANT the Motion to Sever by severing Counts 2, 3, and 5 (*USA v. Melton* on Counts 2, 3, and 5) from Counts 1 and 4 (*USA v. Melton & Pires* on Counts 1 and 4).

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/John J. McConnell, Jr.

John J. McConnell, Jr.
Chief United States District Judge

June 2, 2025